

**New Shoreham Deer Task Force**  
**New Shoreham Police Department, Beach Avenue, Block Island**  
**Monday, January 11, 2010**  
**1:00 p.m.**

Present: Chair Mary Sue Record, Maggie Komosinski, Bill Wilson and George Mellor. Absent were: Christopher Blansfield, Christopher Blane, Paul Deane. Rebecca Ballard and Patricia Doyle arrived late. Fiona Fitzpatrick was present to take the minutes.

DTF Chair Mary Sue Record called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**1. Meeting with Dr. Peter Krause and Dr. Durland Fish to discuss a proposed study by them of the relationship between the size of the deer herd and the incidence of Lyme disease**

Ms. Record introduced Dr. Peter Krause, Senior Research Scientist of Yale's Division of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, and Dr. Durland Fish, Director of the Yale Institute for Biospheric Studies Center for EcoEpidemiology. Dr. Krause has studied the incidence of Lyme disease on the Island and run vaccine trials here.

A discussion ensued. DTF members described their charge to eliminate or dramatically reduce the deer herd to reduce the incidence of tick bourn illnesses.

Dr. Fish said there have been no credible studies showing the relationship between deer abundance and Lyme disease, nor tick abundance and Lyme disease. There have been two replicated studies that showed how environmental manipulations affect the density of nymphal ticks. There is good data to show that as this changes, the incidence of Lyme disease changes. He said the correlation between numbers of deer v. Lyme disease is needed. He also said he does not know a threshold or number of deer that can coexist with people in health, and does not know that there is a measurable correlation. Dr. Fish believes a deer count is a good idea. He would help consult with deer biologists regarding how many deer there are on Block Island. He recommended speaking with deer biologist Oswald Schmitz to find the best way to conduct a count. Dr. Fish as collected ticks on the Island for pathogen anaplasmosis incidence last year and the year before, he plans to continue the surveillance for ticks as base-line information.

Dr. Krause said a study of deer reduction and disease correlation would be unique and of extreme value anywhere there is Lyme disease. Such a study would look at deer, ticks and people. Dr. Krause briefly referenced his 20 year survey of Lyme disease on the Island. The study advertises the opportunity for free Lyme disease tests, and draws blood to test for Lyme and other tick bourne illnesses. Dr. Krause said there is an inherent bias, but they track 80% of the population, which gives a general idea of seroprevalence. Over past few years there has not been as active a collection, but hopes to institute a new methodology this summer and going forward. Grant money may be available for data collection work at the BI Medical Center. Dr. Fish will be able to do the ecological side.

Dr. Krause and Dr. Fish would not be involved in getting rid of the deer. Dr. Fish will continue tick studies, and Dr. Krause will continue human studies. They asked that anyone else involved

in the situation, including the DEM, coordinate through Dr. Krause to avoid a redundancy of effort.

Minutes approved 3/2/2010

Fiona Fitzpatrick